

several times in the nest with our female, helping feed the eaglet which he had not done in 1978.

The Columbus Zoo was working with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources in a cooperative effort to place the eaglet in a wild nest of bald eagles on Lake Erie. However, due to the fact that our female hatched at such an early date, it was not deemed possible to undertake such a task. We then decided to let our male and female raise the eaglet until old enough to hack. Since the Ohio Department of Natural Resources is not equipped with a hacking facility, and due to the expense of hacking, we arranged to transfer the eaglet to New York State.

On 21 May 1980, at 54 days of age, the eaglet was removed from the nest. The eaglet was then taken to Don Scott Field in Columbus and flown via ODNR aircraft to the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge in Seneca Falls, New York. Once there, the eaglet was placed in a hacking tower under the supervision of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, New York Department of Natural Resources, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, and Columbus Zoo personnel.

*Animal Keepers' Forum, July 1980*

### Auckland acquires giraffes, white rhinos from US zoos

Auckland Zoo, New Zealand, which this year experienced the death (while pregnant, with an almost full-term foetus) of their only female giraffe, are expecting the arrival of four young giraffes from the Honolulu Zoo.

Director Derek Wood was in San Diego in July to finalise arrangements for the importation of a pair of white rhinos, where are part of an exchange transaction. It is necessary for the animals to undergo certain blood tests before they can be imported into the country. It all takes time, but we are hopeful of having them here (and the first of the giraffes) and out of quarantine by Christmas. Rhino have never been exhibited in New Zealand before,

and their arrival should certainly boost our attendances.

The tamarins, which were acquired from the Los Angeles Zoo, made their official debut on 13 March and are now well settled in their new quarters — so settled in fact that there have already been two births to the red-bellied species. Conehead, mated to Gnome, produced twins, but one was stillborn. Three weeks later Spock's mate, Nim-nose, had triplets, of which two survived. This was in May and all the youngsters are doing well. Tamarin sires take a very paternal interest in the babies and take turns carrying them about on their backs. They seem to know when it is time to turn them over to the mums for nourishment.

Reg Gates of our keeping staff spent two weeks in the Los Angeles Zoo prior to the tamarins' arrival, so he could learn all about these delicate creatures' special care and requirements. Jacque, the girl keeper on the primate section, had less trouble than did Reg in making friends with the colony due to the fact that they were used to girl keepers in their old home.

They were very suspicious of Reg because he has a beard: all the Los Angeles vets have beards and the tamarins had learnt to associate them with some of life's less pleasant aspects — such as injections. They were also suspicious of New Zealand green grapes which were not the same colour as the lush Californian variety. They took a bit of convincing that these tasted nice too. Grapes are a favourite food, though they always spit out the pips.

In lighter vein, who says elephants are afraid of mice? Almost everybody, but it simply isn't so. At least Ma Shwe, our older Asiatic elephant, certainly isn't. Recently a mouse ventured into her stall and Ma Shwe promptly took action. She herded that mouse into a corner, picked it up with a mouthful of greens — and ate it! A keeper saw the whole incident.

### Otter Trust news

The Otter Trust, Earsham, UK, report the following births: 0.0.2 European

Terry Rowe — AIS



*Healesville Sanctuary's business manager Hugh Turner with two adult alpine dingoes and some of their offspring*

otter (29 January), 0.0.2 European otter (4 August), 0.0.3 Asian short-clawed otter (18 March). The cubs of the Asian short-clawed otters were removed for hand-rearing at the age of three weeks as this particular pair had proved to be poor parents in the past.

In addition to the above births, a female European otter, born at Earsham on 5 June 1978, produced a single cub, but unfortunately did not accept it so that it died soon afterwards. The male otter was also bred at Earsham and was born on 15 November 1978. The female was just two years old at the time of the birth — the youngest age at which breeding has taken place at the Trust. The male was only one year and seven months when the cub was born, and is the youngest male to have bred successfully in the collection.

### Rare alpine dingos at Healesville

Zoologists in Victoria, Australia are participating in a programme to ensure that one of Australia's rarer creatures, the

golden-coloured alpine dingo, does not become extinct. One of a number of forms of dingo, Australia's native dog, it lives in the mountain regions of Australia's south-eastern corner.

Once relatively common, the few remaining alpine dingos are now confined to the most isolated mountain ranges. Their existence also has been threatened by interbreeding with ordinary dogs. In a survey three years ago of skins taken by trappers, 90 per cent were from crossbreds.

Mr Graeme George, director of the Sir Colin MacKenzie Sanctuary at Healesville, near Melbourne, said that because of hunting and cross-breeding, few purebred alpine dingos remain. "We intend to keep a breeding group from known pure wild stock," he said. "If we need to re-establish them in the wild, we have a pure alpine line in captivity from which we could do this."

The alpine dingo is different from other forms in that it has a longer coat, and is usually leaner and redder.

Even when domesticated, dingos are